between Virginia and the Gulf States,—the East Tennessee and Georgia railroad,—would be severed; and that the Confederate cause must be thereby more or less embarrassed.[1] General McClellan also maintained that the occupation of East Tennessee was essential to the success of his proposed campaign in Virginia. Both the President and the General-in-Chief, therefore, strongly urged upon the successive commanders in Kentucky the importance of an early advance into East Tennessee.

But, besides the topographical and other difficulties in the way of such an advance, of which mention has already been made, the state of affairs in Kentucky was such in the fall of 1861 as to cause great anxiety to any prudent commander, and to induce the postponement for the time being of any projects of taking the offensive.

While the neutrality of Kentucky was unquestionably of advantage to the Union party in that State, it had this drawback, namely,—that, while it lasted, the troops raised in the Western and Northwestern States were sent either to Missouri or to Virginia, in both of which States hostilities were actually in progress; so that, when the armistice terminated, the "Union force south of the Ohio was insignificant, and could not easily "be augmented. Then the task of

raising and organizing Union troops, in a State where public opinion was so divided as it was in Kentucky, was one of great difficulty. It seemed also very probable, now that the State had become a part of the theatre of war, that the enemy would make a

[1] 5 N. & H., 61.